THE GREAT DESERT.

THE AREA OF SAHARA NEARLY EQUAL. TO THAT OF EUROPE.

A Barrier to the Progress of Civilization Which Engineering Skill Is Trying to Overcome-The Important Point In the Solution of the African Problem.

We have but to look upon the map to see how large a space upon the world's surface this mighty desert takes to itself. It covers more square miles than the whole of the Mediterranean. It it were transported across that sea, it would extinguish Europe, for it has been computed that if we i leave out Scandinavia it would nearly cover the whole of it. If it were only sunk in the sea, the waves would roll over it, and it would be remembered no more for-

But it insists on keeping its head above water and above ground, crowding out fertile portions of the earth, while its barrenness renders it unfit for human habitation. There it lies on the face of Africa, a huge black spot, deserted by man, as it seems to be accursed No man passes by it or willingly puts his foot thereon. Even the lonely caravan that skims it like a bird leaves no track behind it any more than the bird in the air or the ship on the sea. It passes and is gone, leaving not a trace of life in man or beast or bird or any living thing. So far as we can see, the desert is an utterly worthless por-

tion of the globe.
With such an incubus covering full half of northern Africa there would seem to be little hope of making any-thing out of it, since the cause which renders its condition so hopeless cannot be removed. You cannot abolish the desert any more than you can abolish the sea. There it is, and there it will remain forever. Yes, but you can ge over the sea in ships or under it by tele Yes, but you can get graphs, so that it is no longer a bar to the intercourse of nations. Is there any way of taming the desert or subduing it so that it shall no longer be a barrier to the progress of civilization? This is the most important question to be settled as bearing upon the future of Africa.

Of course if it were left to the native inhabitants all things would continue as they were from the beginning of crea-tion. Nor has Europe at large any in-But there is one European power that has an interest in it. France has large possessions on this side of the Mediterranean, Algeria and Tunis together make a country as large as one of the kingdoms of Europe, which France has the ambition to enlarge still further, so as to have a great African empire, as England has her Indian empire. As part of the materials for this she has another great dependency in Senegambia, on the western coast, a country covering 400,000 square miles.

If this could in any way be united to Algeria, if the two could be consolidated, the new "empire" weuld at once assume vast proportions. But the desert blocks the way. It splits the proposed empire like a wedge. It cannot be re-moved, but is there not some way in which it can be converted into a key-stone for the mighty arch that is to span the continent from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic? That is the problem which has long exercised the minds of French statesmen, and which they in turn have referred to their engineers, who are among the best in the world, with what result may be briefly indi-

First of all, they have shown that it is possible to convert portions of the desert into cases by the sinking of artesian wells. A hundred and forty miles south of Biskra is the oasis of Teggart, which has long supported thousands of Arabs, with their flocks and herds, but which was nearly destroyed some years since by the wells becoming so choked up as to no longer furnish a supply of water. Vegetation withered until the wretched people stripped of what was to them the very water of life and too ignorant to be able to renew the supply, were in despair and began to leave the country.

Then the French engineers took the matter in hand and instead of trying to clear out the old wells commenced bering the solid earth and in five weeks struck water to such a good purpose that a river rushed forth that yielded double the quantity furnished by the great well of Grenelle at Paris. To the Atabs it seemed a miracle, and they began to sing and dance in the wildest manner to express their joy. The miracle is one that can be wrought wherever men are willing to take the labor or to bear the expense. Of course to accomplish a large result in the way of pasturage or agriculture it would have to be repeated on a tremendous scale.

But for the purpose of uniting the two vast territories of Algeria and Senegambia the first necessity is that of direct communication, which can only be by a railroad across the desert of Sahara, this within the bounds of possibility? Nobody's opinion is of any value except that of an engineer, and that I have tried to obtain. In Algiers the American consul took me to see Mr. Brous sais, who has made a special study of the subject and taken long journeys into the desert to survey the field of battle.

He did not conceal from himself the enormous difficulties of traveling 1,500 miles with the want of water, the want of word for railroad ties, the want of everything. He looked in the face the possibilities of these sand storms, which might, bury a railroad train, as they have baried a pasand caravans. All this be b ten into consideration, ag all abstacles and all oange to then, he did not hesitate to assure the that in his judgment a railroad across the desert of Sahara was quite within the resources of modern

engineering. But were the dream already fulfilled, the desert crossed and the tide of travel in full course, the whole African preblem would not be solved. This would much more conducive to health than be one step toward it. - Cor. Evangelist, | severe ones.

TRANSFORMATION.

The morning came as strange and white And still as death doth come. Almost It was as though the earth had slept And woke to find herself a ghost.

Close, oh, so close, to her changed face
The sky drew down! How could she know
Herself as she lay shrouded there
In the white wonder of the snow?
-Mary N. Bradford in Donohoe's Magazine.

The Elder Dumas.

Of his Sheridan-like dealings with tradesmen an anecdote is told. During a scarcity of ice a neighbor of Duma sent to a dealer for some and was told that the limited stock on hand was kept for the use of the famous author. Then the gentleman sent again and bade his servant ask for the ice in the name of M. Dumas. The plan succeeded. The ice was given, and the servant put down the money on the counter. "Ah," cried the tradesman, "give me back that ice! Now I know that you are not from M. Dumas. He never pays ready money,

"My father," said M. Dumas fils, "once told me that if he could portion out a new life he would be a handsome woman till 30, a victorious general from 30 to 50 and a cardinal in his old Dumas, as he related this parental desire, glanced toward Rossini and added: "I should prefer to close my life as an illustrious composer. Mon cher Rossini, when you enter a room, the very lacquer pronounces your name with pride as he announces you.'

Then turning to the company he continued: "Announce, for instance, M. le Due d'Aumale and Signor Rossini at the same moment and see on which side all heads and all hearts will incline first. All eyes would be on the great musician who created 'Il Barbiere de Seviglia. And then we all filled our glasses with armagnae of the vintage of 1811 and drank the health of Rossini. The old composer did not rise, but his face broke out into voluminous smiles as he shook the hand of the author of "La Dame Aux Camellias."—Philadelphia Times.

Pompelian Business Notes.

A number of business announcements are to be found at Pompeii, that brisk little city to whose daily life the energy of Vesuvins has lent a kind of immor Here we get a large number of miscellaneous inscriptions dealing with matters of daily life, announcements of forthcoming gladiatorial games, edicts of magistrates, wine sellers' attempts to captivate customers, rewards for lost or stolen property, houses for sale or to be let and other things of that sort.

We learn from one announcement that a glass of wine could be got for i as—about 3 farthings—while for 4 asses one could drink real Falernian. Another inscription informs us that a denaring about 73, pence—was paid for washing a tunic, and the date, the 13th of April, is carefully recorded by the writ-er. Whether she was the laundress or the owner of the tunic must be left un decided, but it seems at least that she was in the habit of marking up her

There are several such inscriptions on the same wall of this particular house, all dated—the 20th of April, a tunic and pallium; on the 7th of May, an ar ticle which need not be particularized, while on the day following two tunics are scored. - Macmillan's Magazine.

washing account on the walls of he

Dishes and Platters of Gold.

Queen Victoria's wonderful set of taple furniture is kept in two fireproof chambers and is said to represent a cash value of £20,000,000. Among it is the golden table service made for George VI. calculated for 130 guests and containing the famous crystal champagne coeler which is large enough for a bathtub There are many pieces in it that former ly belonged to Queen Elizabeth, beside splendid solid gold vessels from India. Siam and China. The pride of the collection is a teacup once owned by Charles XII and a gold peacock made for George III at a cost of £40,000.— St. Louis Republic.

A Difficult Feat.

A member of a Houston volunteer fire company did not appear at the scene of the conflagration until after the fire was under control. The chief of the fire department reproached him bitterly for his neglect of duty.

'It's not my fault, " replied the fire man. "I live quite a distance from the fire."

"That's no excuse. You must move nearer to the next fire."—Texas Sift-

Very Delicate.

- "So you proposed to Miss Jinglebilt?"
- "And she refused you?"
- "Perhaps it was a hasty answer?" "No. She took care that it shouldn't be. She sent it by a messenger boy." Washington Star.

It is seldom that wood which has grown more than 4,000 years before the Christian era is used in the construction of a present day residence, and yet this really happened recently in Edinburgh, where a mantelpiece was fashioned from wood said to be 6,000 years old

The old fashion of using the candied petals of the orange blossom in tea seems to be almost forgotten. If a few of the candied petals be put into the ten before it is steeped, they give it a flavor noticeably peculiar, but once esteemed

Tommy heard his mother call an insect that was flying around them the darning needle. The next day he said, "Mamma, were those funny things we saw yesterday safety pins?

The title mayor comes from the French and originally signified "one who keeps guard." He was the head steward of a He was the head steward of a city, administering its affairs in the name of the king.

Statistics show that mild winters are

FINANCE AND COMMERCE.

New York Stock Market.

NEW YORK, March 30 .- The steek market to-day opened steady, then declined on account of sharp attacks by brokers usually identified with the Commack interest and finally advanced sharply because the raids of the bears failed to dislodge long stock, forcing the shorts to cover, with the usual re-sul of higher prices all round. London did little or nothing and as for news affeeting the market there was none. The bears yesterday were quite c nations of being able to start liquidations. They interpreted the vete of the seigniorage bill as meaning another free silver crasade and dwelt upon the evils that were

Expecting to disturb confidence they sold heavily of the Grangers and certain of the industrials, naturally with the hote of getting back their contracts at a profit. The pian was well conceived, and would have been successful if holders of stocks could have been frightened into selling, which, however, they refused to do. In consequence the bears, after the assault early in the day. when Burlington and Quincy was forced down to \$1%, Western Union to \$4%, St. Paul to 62%, Sugar to 88% and General Electric to 41% without bringing out any stock to speak of, made a complete change for the week.

This was discovered by the bulls and

This was discovered by the bulls and the efforts of the shorts were impeded at every point. Again the supply of stock was much smaller than the early sellers had calculated up in and this itself proved of assistance to the bulls The improvement from the lowest point of the day was equal to 14@2\gamma\$ per cent. Important gains follows: American Sugar rose 2\gamma\$; preferred, 1\gamma\$; Cotton Oil, 2; do. preferred, 2; American Tobacco, 1\gamma\$, Big Four, 1; Onicago Gas, 2\gamma\$; Burlington and Quincy, 1\gamma\$; St Paul, 1\gamma\$; Rock island, 1; Consolidated Gas, 2\gamma\$; Delaware and Hudson, 1\gamma\$; General Electric, 1\gamma\$; Lake Erie and General Electric, 1%; Lake Erie and Western, 1%; Louisville and Nashville, 1%; Missouri Pacific, 1; Lead, 1%; do. preferred, 2%; Reading, 16; Northern Pacific, 1%; Omaha, 1, and Union Pa-

The market closed strong at about the highest point of the day. The sales were 220,000, against 172,000 shares yesterday Chesapiake and Ohio was ac-tive, 8,200 shares changing hands at if @17%@%; the activity being ascribed in some quarters to liquidations, while others contended that the selling was due to an effort to checkmate a small pool The demand for bonds continued active, although the cales were not as heavy as yesterd sy. The tone was strong.

Money on call is easy at 1 per cent; last loan at 1 and closing offered at 1.

Prime mercantile paper, 31/6/641/2 percent. Bar silver, 59%. Sterling exchange is easy, with actual business in bankers' bills at 487/6/4871/4 for sixty days, and 488/6/6/1891. Commercial bills, 4861/4/6/4881/4 for sixty days, and on quotations for demand. Government bonds steady. State bonds dull. Railroad bonds active. Silver at the board bonds active. Silver at the board neglected.

Produce and Merchandise.

NEW YORK, March 30 .- Flour duli winter wheat, low grades, 2.00@2.45; patents, 3.25@3.50; Minnesota clear, 2.50 @2.90;patents, 3.90 @4.40; low extras, 2.05 @2 45 Southern flour steady, 2.00@3 00; good to choice do, 3.10@4 20. Wheat dull, closed steady; No. 2 red, store and elecicsed steady; No. 2 red, store and elevator 63%, afloat 64%@%; options opened % advance, [61] %@%, closed % @% over yesterday; No. 2 red, March, 62%; May, 63%; July, 65%. Corn easier; No. 2, 45; ungraded mixed, 47; elevator, 47; steamer mixed, 45%; options advanced %@%, feil %, closed steady; March, 46; April, 43%; May, 42%.

Steady, March, 46; April, 43%; May, 42%.

Oats firm: options dull; March, 36; April, 35%; May, 31%; spot No. 2, 36; No. 2 white, 39%, mixed Western, 36@ 37; white do, 38@42. Hay steady; shipping, 60@65; good to choice, 75@80. Wool steady; domestic, 20@25; pulled, 16@25. Beef steady; family, 12@44. Beef hams quiet, 16.00@16 50; tierced beef dull; city extra India mess, 18@20. Cut meats steady; plekled bellios, 6%; shoulders, 6; hams, 9%. Lard firmer: Western steam, 7 65; city, 74; refined firm; continent, 8 05; South America, 8 40; cor pound, 6%. Pork firm; mess, 12.80@13 50. Butter steady; Western dairy, 11@14; Elgins, 21. Cotton-seed oil quiet; crude, 27; yel-

Cotton-seed oil quiet; crude, 27; yellow, 32. Petroleum quiet. Rosin firm; strained, 1.12%@120 Turpentine weak, 28%@29. Rice firm, unchanged. Molasses nominal. Peanuts quiet. Coffee options opened dull, closed firm, 5@10 points ur: May, 16, 10; Sante-h. 10 points up; May, 16 10; September, 15; 10 points up; May, 16-10; September, 15; October, 14-75; Detember, 14-40; seet Rio steady; No. 7, 17½@17½. Sugar, raw dull, unchanged; refined steady; off A, 3 11-16@4; standard A, 4 1-16@4; cut loaf, 4 13-16@5; crushed, 4 13-16@5; granulated, 4 1-16@4% Freights weak; cotton, 9-64 pence; grain, 2% pence.

P. E. THOMAS' BULLETIN.

The following quotations are furnished daily by P. E. Thomas, stock, cotton, grain and pro-visions broker, over Thompson's book store. 'Phone 160:

N. Y. stocks:	Open.	H'h'et	L'et.	Close.
Reading	21.5	21 %	21	21 %
Union Pacific	21 %	22	21 4	22
C. B. & Q	824	823/2	815	85%
I. & N	50%	51%	50%	5136
Omaha	38%	10	28.72	40
N. Y. & N. E	***	****		10.%
Me P	273	28	27%	28
R I	76	70.36	0.95%	70%
St. P	623	61.	63	64 4
W. U	84%	85	81.4	84%
C. Gas	62.4	64.5	62%	64%
A. Sugar	89.%	9º X	8834	203
Diet. & C F	2634	27 4	26.5	27
Gen. Elec	42.5	42%	41.5	424
C. & N. W	108	108%	108	10834
N. Y. C	101	101%	101	101 %
C. C. C. & St. L.	40.8	41	40.36	41
Atchison	15	15%	14%	1534
Nat'l Cordage	20	****	****	20
Lead	39%	89	37%	37 %
Am. Cotton Oil	81 %	32 14	31	32.5
Am. Tob. Co .	81 4	8234	813	823
Del. & Hnd	138	1393	137	1293
Cotton May	7 63	7 63	7 58	7.58
Chicago market:				
Wheat (60%	61	60	603
Corn	37%	37%	37.%	87%
Lard May	6 90	7 0736	6 90	7 05
Pork [11 42%	11 90	11 42%	11 82%
	-	WEITH.	307/33/58	Continue of

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11:50 a. m. for Washington, Hagerstown,

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ı	ar. Louisville	1:57	84
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